437 Often the clerk or storekeeper suggests staples. Many times, after the goods have been packed in a cardboard box and the clerk has turned to wait on a new customer, the purchaser will remember needs originally forgotten. Storemen are used to the idiosyncracies of Indian trading and seldom express any annoyance or impatience. For Indians there is no value in driving a sharp bargain. There is no haggling about price. In part this may be due to the fact that the people still lack a refined sense of the value of money. Furthermore, their reserve and unobtrusiveness are not the personality traits which are customarily associated with shrewd bargaining. Goods purchased are entered on a statement which is marked "Paid," if the buyer pays cash. In either cash or credit transactions, the buyer receives a duplicate of his statement. These are rarely retained and as a result allegations reflecting on a trader's honesty are not infrequent. At times complaints of dishonesty have been turned over to the Indian Agent or policeman, whose duty it then becomes to investigate. Often the individual who feels he has been cheated is content just to voice his complaint to friends. The validity of these complaints is difficult to estimate.

Most of the money received by Indians is spent in Lower Post. Occasionally clothing is ordered from a large mail order house, the independent trader with the poorest stock of goods or the missionary filling in the order blanks. In 1945 Nick Lang and his brother Peter visited Whitehorse where they bought practically all their winter outfit as well as an automobile for cash. Local buying is particularly heavy following the arrival of a new shipment of goods by boat or truck. At such times the stores are always crowded with people curious to see what has been received.

454 Only one or two individuals have opened savings bank accounts in outside cities. These bank by mail through the traders or missionaries. Their accounts are of not more than three or four years standing and are quite small. More common ways of temporarily saving money are to secret it in a corner of the house or leave it on deposit with the traders in Lower Post, where it does not, however, gather interest. Actually little cash is accumulated. In practice most people behave according to the description Nitla gave of himself: "Cash money nothing for me. I got cash money, spend it like nothing."

HOUSING

362 Although housing in Kaska society obviously functions to provide protection from the exigencies of climate, additional factors interfere to prevent any perfect correlation between dwelling form and seasonal usage. One such factor is the mobility of the society demanded as a consequence of the exploitative activities on which subsistence depends. Hunting and trapping frequently require temporary camps, the forms of which alter little in summer and winter. Housing is also influenced by the cooperation, time, and effort involved in building a log cabin. The fact that not everyone is ready or able to meet these requirements results in several families living in easily made shelters both summer and winter. Tarps, tents, and houses, therefore, provide shelter in any season of the year, even though the appropriateness of a house for winter comfort is generally recognized.

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554 A gross correlation between dwelling form and status is discernible. From the standpoint of age, for example, a mature man is generally able to meet the costs involved in con-

structing one or more houses. An unmarried youth, however, never owns a house. Similarly the family of a poor trapper may be unable to afford canvas for a wall tent and so be forced to spend the summer under a tarp. In winter he can secure the materials for a log cabin without monetary cost but, unless assisted by his wife, will often find it difficult to secure free cooperation in assembling the logs. Poor people, therefore, are distinguished by the fact that they own only one house and that of a relatively small size such as could be assembled with a minimum of effort. 362 554

Kaska dwelling forms are open camps, tarps (or fly tents), mosquito tents, wall tents, tent frames, and houses. No matter what type of dwelling is used, occupancy is almost always by a single family. In cold weather, during visits, or in the event of death, two families may share one shelter. Such arrangements, however, are always recognized as temporary. Houses and tents occupied for more than one night are always located within easy access to a river or lake. Mildred Lang once expressed surprise at a white man building his home on the Highway, a mile from the river, and said that she preferred to be able to look out on the river from her home. 342 362

Camps. Open camps are always temporary and consist of a fire and a pallet of spruce brush for a bed. In cold weather such a camp is surrounded by a wall of brush banked with snow. A fly or tarp is constructed out of eight ounce canvas and is generally about seven feet long and seven feet wide. The fly is erected by supporting the canvas lengthwise on a ridge pole resting in two forked sticks. The ridge pole is two or three feet higher in front than in the rear, and the corners of the tarp are tied to four guy posts, three or four feet high, which are driven into the ground at an angle leaning away from the shelter. The sides of such a camp are usually open but may be piled with poplar or spruce brush for protection against direct sun in summer or wind and cold in fall and winter. Food, clothing, and other goods are stored at the rear or along the sides of the shelter, while a fire is built in front. In winter the fire is backed with brush or a small canvas windbreak. Tarps are used in summer for permanent shelters. In winter men use them as overnight camps while traveling along a trap line. 342

Single or double size mosquito tents made of muslin are generally purchased ready-made for two or three dollars. They are provided with ties which are attached to front and rear poles about six feet high and to shorter guy posts planted at each corner. No ridge pole is required. Easy to erect, such shelters are used during the summer by adults, adolescent boys and unmarried men. They are primarily sleeping tents designed to provide protection against insects. A tarp is sometimes erected over a mosquito tent to provide additional protection from long rain.

Wall tents are generally made from eight ounce canvas in varying sizes which are referred to as four, five, or more strip tents. A strip of canvas is thirty inches wide; sewing requires about three inches of overlappage, so that a four strip tent is about nine feet long and seven feet wide. The greatest height is about six feet. Wall tents are supported from a ridge pole and are anchored to six guy posts (Pl. 9, D). These shelters are widely used as summer dwellings. In winter, with the walls enclosed by a tent frame, they serve as permanent residences. A man may also erect one or two wall tents on his trap line for tem-

183 642 easy range of supervision. During the rest of the year, after the people have dispersed to their trapping districts, the authority becomes greatly relaxed. Only rarely do police operate far afield from the trading post.

622 Apart from the representatives of the provincial and Dominion law enforcement agencies, and the Indian Affairs Branch, political authority is nominally invested in native chiefs. Theoretically, each tribe or district is supposed to have a chief. Actually, only the Nelson people have such an executive and he is apparently expected to represent the whole Kaska nation. The chief is appointed by the Indian Agent for an indefinite period without remuneration. The duties of the chief are poorly defined, but he may be regarded as a liaison officer between the government officials and the people.

622 554 The current chief is personally a rather ineffectual person whose nominal authority in no way increases his prestige among the Indians. Since no prerogatives are attached to the office, it is not surprising that his status is not different from that of any other mature adult. The general attitude toward the chief is one of criticism for his failure to be more assertive in the service of his people. Old Kean expressed his opinion of the current chief in the following words: "Just like kid. Never talk nothing. Just sit down one place. That's why nobody go down there [i.e., to the east reserve]. Just stop alone." The fact that the chief does not belong to Old Kean's tribe is undoubtedly a factor influencing the latter's attitude. Observation fails to support the old man's statement that the east reserve was deliberately avoided by the bulk of the society.

622 When the chieftainship was vacant several years ago two Upper Liard men, Old Kean and Old Man, rejected offers of appointment to the position, the former because he felt himself to be too old and the latter because, not receiving payment for his service, he thought people would not listen to him. River Joe is reported to have sought the office unsuccessfully.

656 183 625 It has already been pointed out that the principal governmental activity, with which the Kaska have experience, is regulation. The most common subjects of such regulation are trapping and drinking. In the exercise of their regulatory functions the governments, through their agents, do not act in a manner calculated to allay the Indian's antipathy to authority. In the past there are said to have been police officers willing to overlook many minor infractions of laws applying to Indians, particularly those applying to drinking. Currently policemen, whose problems have greatly increased as a result of the opening of the area by the Alaska Highway and the subsequent influx of strangers, are much more rigorous. During the period of field work they frequently acted as detectives, patrolling Lower Post late at night and visiting camps in order to apprehend misdemeanors.[39] As a result most of the people have learned to be constantly wary of the police. Young men, even if innocent of any offense, often flee and hide when an officer is reported to be approaching. In short,

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[39] It is not uncommon for provincial and Dominion police to enter a tent or cabin without a warrant if they have reason to suspect drinking. While Indians are unaware of the powers of a warrant, they resent the invasion of their privacy. From white men Indians have learned to question the right of the Mounted Police to operate in British Columbia, where a local police organization is maintained. The Mounties explain that they are free to operate anywhere in the Dominion of Canada when engaged in the enforcement of national revenue (liquor) and Indian regulations.

by the individual and his immediate family. A father-in-law and son-in-law may assist each other if poor health strikes, but such assistance is limited to gifts of food or casual labor (cutting a little wood, making an occasional trip to the trap line) and never extends to gifts of money. Problems arising from sickness are shouldered as inevitable, but promote considerable self-pity and despair. A sick person is neither neglected by his spouse or parents nor exceptionally well treated. Illness is generally not catered to, and a sick adult or older child, unless he actively resists, is rarely excused from work. There are, therefore, few satisfactions to be derived from illness, although men often use their symptoms as justifications for inactivity or procrastination. In general people do not remain in bed until they are seriously sick. A patient may sit a great deal or, if an old woman, crouch on the ground, but is slow to lie down. 734

As far as treatment is concerned, any man or woman may assume the role of therapist, 757 a role conferring little status or prestige. Generally a parent ministers to a child, a husband and wife to each other. There is still a residual belief that certain individuals, particularly older men like River Joe, possess supernaturally derived curative power. This belief, however, serves no important function and such reputed shamans are no longer requested to practice. [754] An incident reported by Old Man illustrates contemporary attitudes. Five or six years ago Willy Wiley accidentally shot himself through the hand. The boy's father, Old Wiley, refused to consider Old Man's resolution to send the boy outside for medical treatment. "Fortune gonna heal it," Old Wiley said, referring to the concept of supernatural power. Old Man replied: "Fortune not gonna help." The latter's opinion prevailed, and Willy was flown to Fort St. John, where the injury was successfully treated. In native therapy, medicine is rarely forced upon an unwilling patient and even adolescents are usually permitted to control their own treatment. Thus Old Man reported that his daughter, Louisa, had been prescribed "T. B. medicine" by the Canadian Air Force physician at Watson Lake Airport. The medicine was given to Old Man with instructions that the girl take it daily. "Doctor tell me, 'Make her take it'." Nevertheless Old Man left it up to Louisa to treat herself. "I don't think she take it yet," he remarked several months later.[illegible]

The most important therapy comes from outside the Indian community. Since their stay 757 in the area, the Roman Catholic missionaries have dispensed a limited amount of simple medication, and white trappers also from time to time provide first aid and simple remedies 657 for Indians encountered in the bush. During 1944 and the greater part of 1945, highly qualified medical therapy together with limited hospital facilities were available from Canadian and United States Army physicians, dentists, and nurses who were stationed at Watson Lake Airport to serve the air forces. The facilities for such care were readily used by the Indians until they were withdrawn in the fall of 1945. Several times Canadian and United States doctors made unofficial visits to Lower Post, where they advised patients who sought them out. In January 1945, an United States Army physician parachuted from a plane near Smith River, to help curb a dysentery outbreak that has already claimed the lives of several children. When his work was done, Indians guided him out of the bush to the Alaska Highway.

[illegible] Information received during the winter of 1948-49 revealed Louisa to be a patient in a hospital far south of the Kaska area.

Museum Specimen No. 52.) All collars and necklaces were fastened with strings at the back of the neck. They were considered emblematic of maidenhood. It was taken off when a girl got married or knew men. 301 [154]•

When the girl entered among the people she donned new clothes of the same general kind as worn by women. Her high cap, if she had worn such, her robe and other old clothes were given away. The robe was generally cut up and the pieces distributed among the women. If her cap was of red or blue cloth it also was cut up in small pieces and given away as pieces for covering tongues of moccasins. Often at the same time the girl's mother cut up several of her dressed caribou or moose skins and gave them away to the women. If the father of the girl was wealthy he gave a feast to all the neighbors and presents of skins. The father gave the presents only to people of his own phratry. If he was of the Raven phratry, women of this phratry married to Wolf men received presents just like others of the phratry. The girl was now marriageable and could easily be distinguished as a marriageable maiden by her hair dress, ornaments etc. At the end of four years, after her becoming pubescent, if the girl was still unmarried she changed her style of face painting. From now until marriage she painted her face in fanciful styles, (if she so wished) and she increased the ornaments on her person.

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